

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 PM-05 L-03 H-01 NSC-05
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06
PRS-01 SP-02 /060 W
-----116132 302243Z /72

R 301614Z AUG 77
FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5272
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIO DE JANEIRO 4146

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS : SREF SHUM AR BR US
SUBJECT : ARGENTINE REFUGEES IN BRAZIL

REF: RIO DE JANEIRO 4065

1. CONGEN POLOFF SOUGHT OUT UNHCR ACTING REPRESENTATIVE HERRERA AUGUST 26 TO CLARIFY AND TO SEEK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING CHARGES SHE HAD MADE IN EARLIER CONVERSATION ABOUT DETERIORATION IN SECURITY OF ARGENTINE POLITICAL REFUGEES HERE (REFTEL).

2. MS HERRERA PASSED ON COPIES OF WRITTEN STATEMENT BY GUILLERMO CESAR TORRES CASTANOS, ARGENTINE NATIONAL WHO CLAIMED HE HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED AND TORTURED, AS WELL AS UNHCR CASE HISTORY OF TORRES CASTANOS, HIS WIFE, AND CHILD. BASED ON TORRES CASTANOS' REPORT TO UNHCR, HE ALLEGED THAT HE WAS KIDNAPPED DURING EVENING OF JULY 24, TAKEN TO LOCATION ABOUT ONE HOUR FROM COPACABANA (WHERE HE HAD BEEN ABDUCTED), BEATEN ABOUT THE FACE AND BODY AND GIVEN ELECTRIC SHOCKS, BY MIXED GROUP OF BRAZILIANS AND ARGENTINES. HE CLAIMS LATTER IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE. HE WAS QUESTIONED
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ABOUT VARIOUS ARGENTINES IN BRAZIL. ON JULY 28, HE ESCAPED.
(EMBASSY COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST INDICATION WE HAVE HAD THAT ARGENTINE AND BRAZILIAN FEDERAL POLICE MIGHT REPEAT MIGHT BE INVESTIGATING ARGENTINE CITIZENS IN BRAZIL AND POSSIBLY COOPERATING ON REFOULEMENT.)

3. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE PRIM SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED THIS INCIDENT

TO FEDERAL POLICE IN RIO DE JANEIRO. AUGUST 18, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL POLICE (DPPS) REPRESENTATIVE CAME TO UNHCR OFFICES TO REQUEST THAT TORRES CASTANOS MAKE DEPOSITION CONCERNING INCIDENT AT DPPS HEADQUARTERS. TORRES CASTANOS LATER STATED THAT WHILE BEING INTERROGATED HE WAS TOLD BY DPPS OFFICIAL THAT HIGH ARGENTINE POLICE OFFICIAL HAD JUST CONCLUDED VISIT HERE FOR PURPOSES OF IDENTIFYING ARGENTINES FOR RETURN TO ARGENTINA. HE ALSO CLAIMED TO RECOGNIZE DPPS HEADQUARTERS AND DPPS OFFICIALS FROM PERIOD WHEN HE HAD BEEN SEQUESTERED.

4. MS HERRERA SAID THAT TORRES CASTANOS, WITH HIS FAMILY, DEPARTED BRAZIL FOR SWEDEN ON AUGUST 21. FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD IN INTERIM SUMMONED UN REPRESENTATIVE IN BRASILIA FOR MEETING WHERE MINISTRY OFFICIAL INDICATED THAT TORRES CASTANOS' DEPARTURE AS PLANNED WOULD NOT BE CONVENIENT. MINISTRY OFFICIAL DID NOT INDICATE THAT DELAY IN ORDER TO PERMIT WOUNDS TO HEAL WAS REASON FOR REQUEST. MS HERRERA SAID THAT UN REP TOLD FONMIN THAT A DELAY WOULD PROBABLY DRAW GREATER ATTENTION TO KIDNAPPING INCIDENT THAN WOULD A NORMAL DEPARTURE AS SCHEDULED SINCE SWEDISH OFFICIALS EXPECTED FAMILY'S DEPARTURE ON AUGUST 21. AT THE TIME OF HIS DEPARTURE, ONLY MARKS FROM THE INCIDENT WERE CUTS AROUND WRISTS FROM CHAINS HE WORE DURING KIDNAPPING.

5. COMMENT: FROM FOREGOING, IT IS EVIDENT THAT ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED RIO REFTEL ORIGINATED FROM SINGLE SOURCE -- TORRES CASTANOS. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT TORRES CASTANOS MAY HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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FABRICATED INCIDENT IN ORDER TO SPEED UP HIS DEPARTURE FROM BRAZIL (ALTHOUGH HIS CASE HAD BEEN APPROVED BY UNHCR PRIOR TO INCIDENT). WHILE UNHCR IS INTERESTED IN OBTAINING USG PARTICIPATION IN ARGENTINA REFUGEE PROGRAM, UNHCR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE REPORTED TO GENEVA AND CONGEN INCIDENT CITED IN GOOD FAITH.

6. EMBASSY CONCURS.
DEXTER

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Sent Date: 30-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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